

105TH CONGRESS
2D Session

H. CON. RES. 288

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress that the United States should support the efforts of Federal law enforcement agents engaged in investigation and prosecution of money laundering associated with Mexican financial institutions.

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Whereas Mexico is an important ally of the United States and these countries' economies, cultures, and security interests are permanently intertwined;

Whereas illegal drugs continue to destroy our cities and kill our children, the illegal international narcotics trade poses a direct and pernicious threat to the vital national

interests of the United States, and combating this threat is one of our Nation's highest priorities;

Whereas Mexico is one of the major source countries for narcotic drugs and other controlled substances entering the United States;

Whereas criminal organizations engage in money laundering to reap the financial benefits of the illegal narcotics trade and combating money laundering is a necessary and integral part of a national strategy to combat the narcotics trade;

Whereas Mexico is currently unable to limit meaningfully the laundering of drug proceeds in its financial institutions, as noted in the Department of State's 1997 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, which indicates that Mexico "continues to be the money laundering haven of choice for the transportation of United States cash drug proceeds";

Whereas, despite the commitment of President Zedillo to combat drug trafficking and money laundering, the Government of Mexico "acknowledges that narcotics-related corruption is pervasive and entrenched within the criminal justice system and that it has spread beyond that sector", as demonstrated by the February 1997 arrest of the chief of Mexico's National Counternarcotics Institute on charges of accepting bribes from, and complicity with, the drug cartels, shortly after receiving confidential briefings from United States law enforcement agencies;

Whereas progressively more violent, organized, and widespread illegal drug operations constitute a threat not only to the health and well-being of the Mexican people but

also to the integrity of the Mexican Government and its law enforcement agencies;

Whereas the vast majority of people and public servants in Mexico support ridding their country of this dark and sinister threat;

Whereas the United States Customs Service, in conjunction with other United States law enforcement agencies, recently concluded “Operation Casablanca”, the largest undercover money laundering investigation in the history of the United States, in which over 100 persons were arrested and three Mexican financial institutions were indicted;

Whereas Operation Casablanca is in the interest of the people of the United States, as it strikes a direct blow against the laundering of the proceeds of illegal drug sales in Mexican financial institutions and is necessary for an effective effort against money laundering in the United States;

Whereas United States law enforcement agents participating in Operation Casablanca placed themselves in peril of severe injury or death in order to combat the illegal narcotics trade;

Whereas recently the Government of Mexico has reportedly announced a desire to investigate and possibly prosecute United States law enforcement officials involved in Operation Casablanca on the ground that United States law enforcement agents allegedly operated on Mexican soil without prior notification of the Government of Mexico;

Whereas the Government of Mexico had been notified of the broad concept but not details of a money laundering investigation; whereas notification of details could have

jeopardized the safety of United States law enforcement officials; and

Whereas notification to foreign governments of the specifics of undercover money laundering investigations conducted by the United States could, under certain circumstances, render ineffective such investigations, which would be contrary to the interests of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of the Congress that—

3 (1) undercover law enforcement investigations,
4 including under appropriate circumstances sting op-
5 erations, are necessary to counter increasingly so-
6 phisticated money laundering schemes that involve
7 financial institutions in this country and other coun-
8 tries, including Mexico; and

9 (2) the United States should not agree to extra-
10 dite to Mexico United States law enforcement agents
11 involved in Operation Casablanca for actions taken
12 within the scope of Operation Casablanca.

Passed the House of Representatives June 22, 1998.

Attest:

Clerk.